Fate of Prasar Bharati Board

690. SHRI KARTAR SINGH DUGGAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the fate of the Prasar Bharati Board and its Chief Executive after the lapse of the Prasar Bharati Ordinance;

(b) in the absence of the ordinance and relevant legislation have AIR and Doordarshan reverted to the Minister of Information and Broadcasting;

(c) if not, where do the Prasar Bharati Board and the Chief Executive figure in the administrative set up, policy formulation and the day to day programming; and

(d) whether the independence of the Prasar Bharati Board been diluted?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) There has been no change in their status.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The Prasar Bharati Board is responsible for the general superintendence, direction and management of the affairs of the Corporation.

(d) No, Sir.

Rationalising Tax Structure/Censorship for Film Industry

691. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to accord industry status to film media and are contemplating rationalising of tax structure and streamlining of methods at present followed in the country;

(b) if so, whether Government would ensure that film industry make good character building films with Indian cultural values instead of making "sexy" and indecent films which are spoiling character of our youths; and

(c) what were the suggestions made at a recently held National Conference on "Challenges before Indian Cinema" held in Mumbai and reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SMT. SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir. Recommendations have also been made in regard to rationalisation of certain taxation issues which have a bearing on the film industry.

(b) The film industry is primarily in the private sector. The Government encourages the growth and development of good cinema through the institution of the national awards. Further, the National Film Development Corporation finances production of low budget films having socially relevant themes.

(c) The major suggestions made at the Conference include reduction/abolition of entertainment tax, declaration of the film sector as an industry, rationalisation of certain taxation measures concerning the film industry, protecton of copy rights of film producers, establishment of an Export Promotion Council for films, review of censorship provisions, resumption of telecast of regional films on Doordarshan's national channel and provision of financial assistance to independent documentary film makers. These suggestions, as well as other issues raised by the film industry from time to time, are constantly reviewed and appropriate decisions taken.

Cigarette/Liquor Advertisement on Satellite Televison Programmes

692. SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of the plethora of cigarette and liquor advertisements in satellite television programmes;

(b) whether advertisements of this nature are not considered harmful to the national interests; and